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**Adequate Yearly Progress Report Released on Montana Schools  
Test Scores Demonstrate Growth and Improved Student Achievement**

HELENA - Superintendent of Public Instruction Denise Juneau today released the tenth annual Adequate Yearly Progress report (AYP) to comply with the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). A large majority of Montana's public schools met the federal education requirements for yearly progress, the highest in a five-year period, despite continual increases in testing goals. The report shows 608 (74.1 percent) of Montana's 820 public schools currently meet the requirements of the federal law.

Juneau also released data that shows consistent improvement in student test scores over time. The current testing goals are 89.6 percent of students scoring proficient or above for Reading and 80 percent of students scoring proficient or above for Math. Last year's Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for were 84.4 percent in Reading and 70 percent in Math. The AYP graduation rate goal is currently 85 percent.

"We have high expectations for our public schools in Montana, and our students and teachers have been working very hard to improve test scores in reading, math and science. Their efforts are demonstrated by the continued progress in academic performance statewide." Juneau stated.

| Percentage of Students at or above "proficient" in Reading and Math 2005-2012 |         |      |
|---|---------|------|
|   | Reading | Math |
| 2005-2006   | 78      | 61   |
| 2006-2007   | 81      | 63   |
| 2007-2008   | 81      | 63   |
| 2008-2009   | 82      | 64   |
| 2009-2010   | 84      | 67   |
| 2010-2011   | 85      | 68   |
| 2011-2012   | 86      | 68   |

*[Source: Montana Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT) Scores, MontCAS]*

Schools are required to meet 41 benchmarks on the state test to meet AYP under the federal NCLB. A school's adequate yearly progress is calculated based on test participation, academic achievement, the graduation rate and other statistics. Every few years, the percentage of students who must achieve proficiency on state tests increases to get closer to the 2014 deadline of 100 percent proficiency for all students.

Montana continues to outperform the nation on measurements of student achievement. According to the 2011 'Nation's Report Card', only one state scored higher than Montana eighth graders in math and no states scored higher in reading. In grade four math, only seven states scored higher than Montana and in grade four Reading only five states scored higher. In the latest science report card, Montana's eighth graders shared the highest score in the nation with just three other states and our fourth graders ranked second-highest.

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During the 2010-2011 school year, Montana's graduation rate increased from 80.2% to 82.2%. The national graduation rate is 75.5%.

"While we wait for long-overdue action by Congress to reauthorize No Child Left Behind, I am working with the public school community to improve education in Montana in a way that matters for our students and prepares them for college and careers. Montana's educators continue to rise to the challenge to improve student achievement and ensure our students are prepared for the jobs of today and tomorrow."

Superintendent Juneau pointed to the following reform efforts currently underway in Montana:

- Improving graduation rates through Graduation Matters Montana, a statewide initiative engaging schools, communities, businesses and families in a focused effort to ensure students graduate prepared for college and the workforce.
- Implementing the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. These standards are higher and clearer than our current standards, aligned with college and workforce expectations and designed to ensure our students are learning the skills they need to be competitive in a global economy.
- Unprecedented collaborating in three communities to turn around the state's lowest-performing schools, which resulted in increases in the average CRT scores of all participating high schools in Reading, Math and Science.
- Updating the Montana accreditation standards to make them more performance-based and giving schools the flexibility they need to focus on student achievement.
- Through Montana's GEAR UP grant, providing the ACT to every public school junior at no cost to their families starting in the 2012-2013 school year.
- Rolling out a new data warehouse to improve transparency and access to education data for parents and the public and allowing more individualized instruction and support services for students by teachers and administrators.

"We continue to celebrate our great educational outcomes in Montana as well as confront our challenges," said Juneau. "Montana schools and students continue to outperform the nation. Where reform is necessary, we work in collaboration with Montana teachers and administrators to find a local solution that fits our rural communities."

The "Adequate Yearly Progress" status of each Montana school and district is summarized on the Office of Public Instruction's Web site at: <http://opi.mt.gov/AYP>.

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